

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the Abstract as follows:

ABSTRACT

~~Described herein are the identification of nucleotide~~ Nucleotide sequences specific to *Yersinia pestis* that ~~serves as a marker or signature~~ serve as markers or signatures for identification of this bacterium were identified. In addition, forward and reverse primers and hybridization probes derived from these nucleotide sequences that are used in nucleotide detection methods to detect the presence of the bacterium are disclosed.